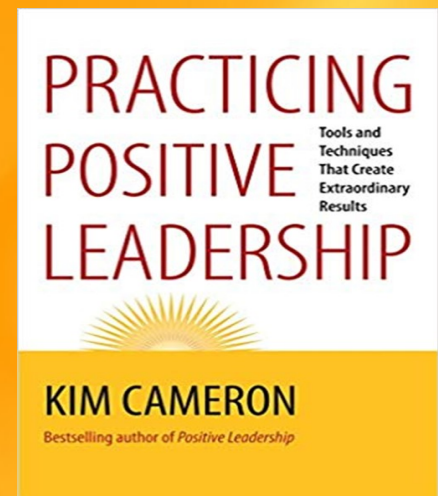# PRACTICING POSITIVE LEADERSHIP

Tools and Techniques That Create Extraordinary Results

KIM CAMERON   **NOVEMBER 2019**

OVERVIEW

More in-depth information given in putting the strategies of positive leadership into practice. The four key leadership strategies in an organization include creating a positive climate, building positive relationships, positive communication with colleagues and positive meaning. Building on the network of positive leadership strategies in enabling organizations to achieve their highest potential in performance is the foundation of development. Five sets of concrete positive leadership practices are outlined to aid with the implementation of the four positive strategies in any organization.

Cameron, K. S. (2013). *Practicing Positive Leadership: Tools techniques that create extraordinary results*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
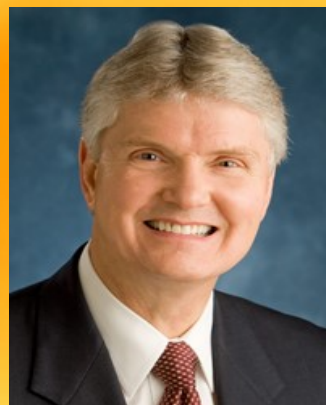
Kim Cameron is the William Russell Kelly professor of Management and Organizations at the Ross School of Business and Professor of Higher Education in the School of Education at the University of Michigan. Formerly dean of the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University, He also served as associate dean at both the Marriott School of Management at Brigham Young University and in the Ross School of Business. He is the coauthor or coeditor of 15 scholarly books and published in more than 130 academic articles.

Why Practice Positive Leadership?

Positive leadership involves the enactment of several positive practices that aid individuals and organizations to achieve their highest potential reaching levels of effectiveness deemed difficult otherwise. Thus, the primary objectives of positive leadership is to produce extraordinarily high performance, generating positively deviant results and creating remarkable vitality in the workplace.
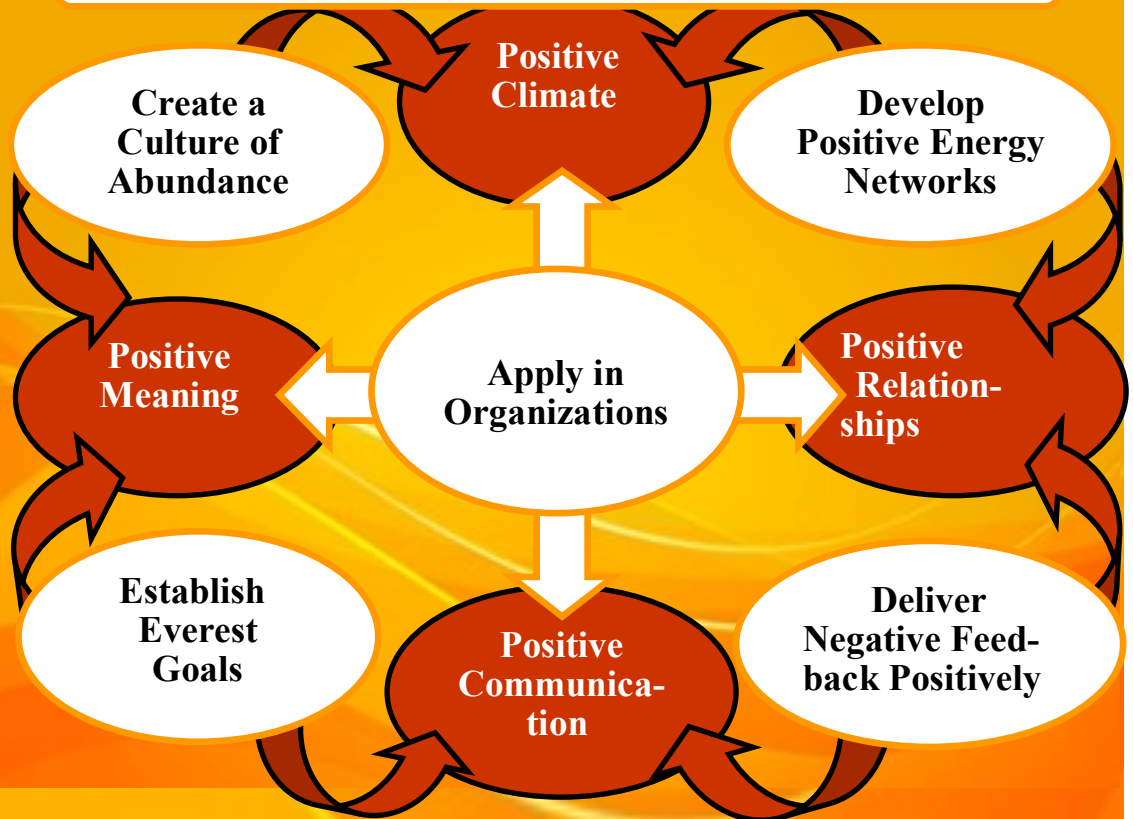
The practice of positive leadership is important, whereby positivity is heliotropic. Individuals and organizations through interactions tendency are to move toward positive energy and away from negative energy. Positive information is processed more accurately by persons. They effectively learn, retain positive terms and events than neutral or negative ones. Positive stimuli are sought out in comparison to negative stimuli.

Positive words have higher frequency in all languages. Bodily functions are at their peak when people experience positive and virtuous conditions compared to neutral or negative conditions.

"Negative leaders represent waste and inefficiency. Whereas positive leadership produces sustainable improvement."

Positive Leadership Practices That Lead to Positive Strategies

- Create a Culture of Abundance
- Positive Climate
- Develop Positive Energy Networks
- Positive Meaning
- Apply in Organizations
- Positive Relationships
- Establish Everest Goals
- Positive Communication
- Deliver Negative Feedback Positively

Evidence also exists that human beings react more strongly to negative than the positive. More attention is given to critical comments than positive compliments. While traumatic events have a greater impact than positive ones, all living things react strongly to threats to their existence. The effects of negative information and events take longer to wear off than the effects of positive information or events. In overcoming the effects of the negative, an important function of positive leadership is to demonstrate tools, techniques and practices. When greater emphasis is given to positive practices than negative practices, individuals and organizations tend to flourish.

Positive Leadership And Organizational Performance

Source:https://www.laureate.net/positive-leadership-global-90-90-challenge-exceeds-expectations-across-the-network/

Organizational leadership effects are different from that of individuals; leaders have to address multiple constituencies. Most importantly, a question one has to ask is whether positive practices produce positive outcomes in organizations as oppose to individuals.
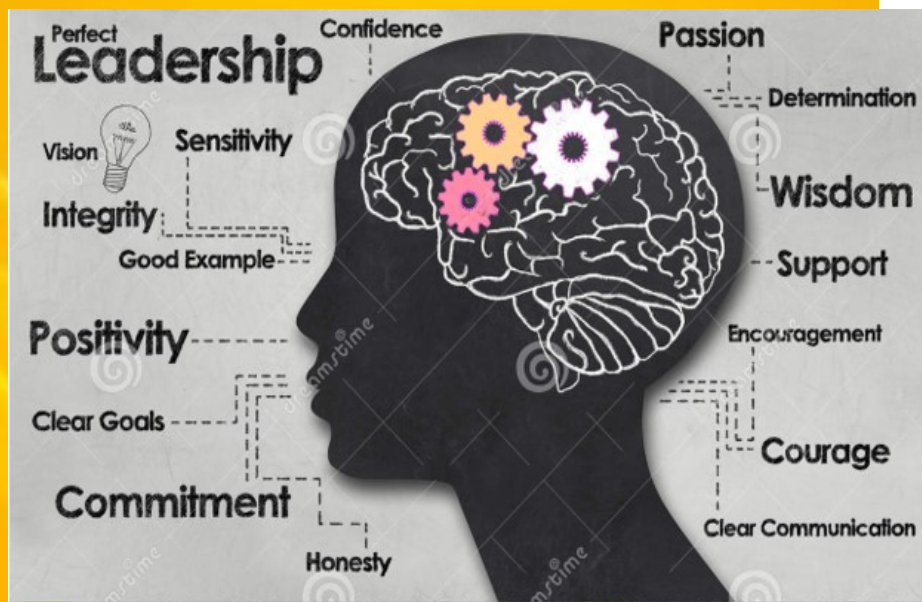
Consideration has to be given by the leader to the processes, routines and structures; respect given to cultures, embedded values and traditions. The preferences and relationships of employees must be taken into account. Through the implementation of positive practices, profitability, productivity, quality, customer satisfaction and employee retention are increased. Studies have shown that positive leadership practices can produce substantial furtherance in all types of organizations. The effective use of the practices is not limited to a particular sector or type of organization.

"You want to show your people that you value them, and that you aren't going to hurt them just to get a little more money in the short run. Not furloughing people breeds loyalty. It breeds a sense of security. It breeds a sense of trust."

Source: https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-image-perfect-leadership-female-brain-outline-positive-words-image36711821

A positive leader has to be a source of positive energy. Positively energized leaders create remarkable performance on other people and in their organizations. Positive leadership does not always entail constant smiling and sweet interactions. Under positive leadership, delivery of negative messages occurs, problems are addressed and also tackling difficult issues. The delivery of negative feedback positively is an essential component of positive leadership. The implementation of tools, techniques and practices helps to build and strengthen relationships even through corrective or disapproving feedback when delivered. A common technique of positive leadership for motivating performance and for maintaining accountability is goal setting.

Regards to positive leadership, what works in the context of an organization may not necessarily work the same in interpersonal interactions. Varying dynamics in an organization introduces complexities, competing values and the need for trade-offs.

How To Create A Culture of Abundance

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The organization's culture is the values, expectations, collective memories, and implicit meanings that are taken for granted that defines the organization's core values.

Different levels and Manifestations of culture

The organization's culture is the values, expectations, collective memories, and implicit meanings that are taken for granted that defines the organization's core values.

CREATING READINES

- **Comparative Standards**: Comparing current performance to leading individuals or organizations.

- **Goal Standards**: Comparing current performance to publicly stated goals.

- **Improvement Standards**: Comparing current performance with improvements made in the past.

- **Ideal Standards**: Comparing current performance with an ideal or perfect standard.

- **Stakeholder Expectation**: Comparing performance with expectations of customers, employees, or other stakeholders.

Observable

Explicit Behaviors

Artifacts

Norms

Implicit Assumptions

Unobservable

OVERCOMING RESISTANCE

One of the roles of a positive leader is to overcome resistance by changing it into positive energy. One way to look at resistance is via Kurt Lewin's field theory of change.

Positive culture change results from an imbalance of forces. Overcoming resistance to

FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS – KURT LEWIN

DRIVING FORCES (Positive forces for change)   RESTRAINING FORCES (obstacles to change)

Present State or Desired State
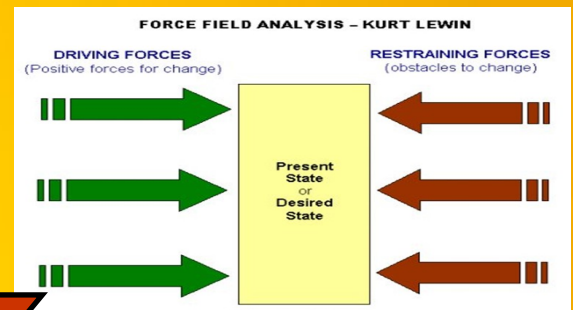
culture change involves weakening or eliminating restraining forces as well as strengthening and adding driving force.

Creating a Culture of Abundance

Creating Readiness

Overcoming Resistance

Fostering Sustainability

Generating Commitment

Articulating a Vision of Abundance

How To Develop Positive Energy Networks

Positive energy lies at the heart of positive leadership. Leaders who are positively energized create extraordinary high performance in their organizations and with people. Positive energy allows us to perform, create and to persist characterized by the feeling of aliveness, arousal, vitality and zest. This energy when unlocked within us, increases our ability to flourish; it is an important attribute of leaders. Rational energy increases as it is exercised in contrast to the three types of energy outlined which depletes when used. Through positive interpersonal relationships that uplifts, invigorates and rejuvenates us when ex

PHYSICAL ENERGY	• Energy associated with the interaction between glucose, the substance that provides the energy for cells and adenosine triphosphate (ATP).
PSYCHOLOGICAL ENERGY	• Associated with mental concentration and cognitive focus
EMOTIONAL ENERGY	• Associated with the experience of intense feelings

pressing and receiving rational energy. It is important for leaders of organizations know how to utilize this positive rational energy by enabling others to use it as well. Fundamentally, positive energy is a product of flourishing interpersonal relationships. It is not the same as motivation, incentive systems or receiving recognition but can be taught and learnt. Positive energizers can be developed by positive leaders by recognizing, rewarding and developing them.

Characteristics of Positive Energizers

ENERGIZERS

- They help other people flourish.
- They are trustworthy and have integrity.
- They are dependable.
- They use abundance language
- They are heedful and fully engaged.
- They are genuine and authentic
- They see opportunities.
- They solve problems.
- They smile.
- They express gratitude and humility.

DE—ENERGIZERS

- They mostly see roadblocks and obstacles.
- They create problems.
- They do not allow others to be valued.
- They are inflexible in their thinking.
- They do not show concern for others.
- They often do not follow through.
- They are self-aggrandizing.
- They are mostly somber and solemn.
- They are superficial and inauthentic.
- They are frequently critical.

The association made with a set of interactive behaviours that can be learnt or developed is a characteristic of positive energy. People who are positively energized are more adoptive, more creative. They suffer from fewer physical illnesses and accidents and experience richer interpersonal relationships compared to others. They Limit their communication with de-energizers being attracted to positive energizers. Building and nurturing strong interpersonal relationships are important in fostering positive energy.

Articulating a Vision of Abundance

Vision of abundance is picturing the organization as an entity that flourishes that create a legacy about which people care deeply. Visions of goal and achievement or effectiveness, the focus on earning a certain level of profit, being number one in the market space or get recognition. Visions of abundance is the opposite of this; it speaks to the heart as well as the head.

The vison is made interesting by appealing to both sides of the brain. The left

Source: https://mc2.bid4papers.com/blog/8-ways-left-brain-thinkers-boost-creativity/
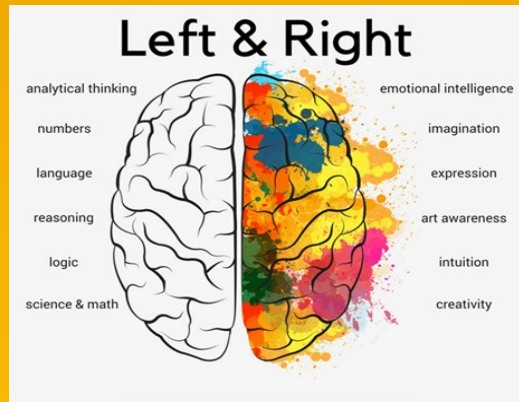
hemisphere controls rational, cognitive activities while the right hemisphere, in contrast, controls non-rational cognitive activities. Vision statements must appeal to both the left brain and the right brain elements being that neither operates autonomously from the other. With new insights created or a new way of thinking, people are drawn by interesting information. Herby, making visions of abundance an interesting concept.

GENERATING

Identify Small Wins

COMMITMENT

The members of the organization through positive leadership. They own while working towards accommunicates the vision. Commitment veloped through a culture of abunpositive leadership, small wins are tion.

Individuals are motivated by public they will do. Public pronouncements more committed and be more conhave embraced. Reinstating the vilic statements in favour of the viabundance look for these opportuni-

They reduce importance of any change
- They reduce demands on any group or individual
- They improve the confidence of participants

They help avoid resistance or retaliation
- They attract allies and create a bandwagon effect
- They create the image of progress

If they do not work there are no long lasting effects
- They provide initiates in multiple arenas, reducing the chance of resistance forming in one

become committed to the vision are adopting the vision as their plishing it after the leader comto a culture of abundance is dedance. Within the culture of publicized within the organiza-

declarations to do what they say cause individuals to be much sistent in the behaviour they sion by having others make pubsion, leaders create a culture of ties.

FOSTERING SUSTAINABILITY

Culture abundance sustained over time is achieved when the change extends beyond surface-level behaviour, values, ideology and preferences change at a fundamental level. All members are to become champions of change creating processes that reinforce the positive change without having to rely on the leader continually. Positive change will continue with the absence of the leader.

When people are held accountable to achieve, change becomes sustainable. Therefore, sustaining positive change with clear metrics are identified, the measurement system in place and a milestone specified for when change is accomplished.
Communication Through the medium of stories, cultural change can be sustained. By the illustration of desired behaviours by the telling and retelling of stories, employees demonstrate the

values and virtues exemplified in the new culture. With change and uncertainty, people require social support. Interpersonal relationships are especially critical to culture change.
For the organization to sustain change, positive leaders must have the skills to create the consensus and collaboration required for this to happen. Demonstrating personal commitment and responsibility for change is to be done by leaders.

VALUE ADDED CONTRIBUTION PRACTICE

Positive leaders develop strong interpersonal relationships in highlighting others' strengths, capabilities and contributions enabling the organization to do the same. Herby, highlighting the unique enterprise upon which others can build.

- Produce positive and developmental feedback for each other

- Distribute it

- Provide time for interpretation

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

Personal contemplative practices are one such way in which positive personal energy is advanced. A well developed contemplative practice is loving-kindness meditation. It focuses on self-generated feelings of love, compassion, and goodwill toward oneself and others.

- Engage in a short period of loving kindness meditation each day.

- Keep a gratitude journal

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- **Competition is Present:** There is always fun when testing against a standard whether against personal past performance or against others.

- **Social interaction is fostered:** Recreation and fun are associated with the chance to socialize and interact.

Positive energy can be measured, a construct can be done within the organization to identify positive energizers. Identifying which people serve as hubs in the organization through energy networks. Statistical mapping, a bubble chart or a pulse survey can be used to assess positive energy networks.

FUN AND RECREATION

Positive energy and fun are interconnected. Engagement in fun activities breaks routine and boredom. It also fosters and enables positive energy connecting it to interpersonal relationships.

- **Goals are positive and clearly defined:** Recreation is associated with goals. Positive goals make activities fun.

- **Scorekeeping is objective and self-administered:** The score is always known in creation. When score keeping is not done interest is lost.

- **Feedback is frequent:** In recreational activities we know how we are doing at any given moment.

- **Personal choice exist:** Recreation allows us to modify our behaviour at will. Not being constrained to a specific routine or process that cannot be modified.

- **Rules are standard and stable:** Rules are always clear in recreation. A goal is always a goal.
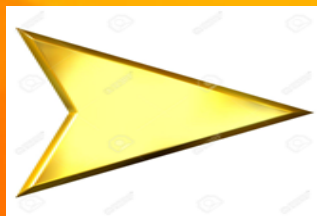
A Positive Energy Bubble

Unit Members' Nomination

John	12
Mary	2
Susan	1
Lin	7
Chong	4
Bob	6
Alisha	7

How To Deliver Negative Feedback Positively

Flourishing Relationships

Leadership entails giving corrective or disapproving feedback. At times communication will involve delivering messages that are uncomplimentary, negative in tone, critical analysis while tackling difficult issues and challenging problems. Supportive communication is key in knowing how to be critical without being defensive causing egos bruised or based on opposing points of view.

Positive-To-Negative Ratio

- Make at least three positive statement for every negative statement

- Ensure honesty and genuineness

Source: https://www.deakinco.com/media-centre/news/6-strategies-for-managing-and-improving-team-dynamics

Supportive Communication Is Congruent Not Incongruent

Congruence communication is verbal and nonverbal, which matches exactly what an individual is thinking and feeling. Being completely honest, communicating what you intend to say.

- Ensure that statements are consistent with thoughts and feelings

- Display authenticity and sincerity in statements

Supportive Communication

- **Congruence**: Be authentic, sincere, straight forward, and honest in delivering communication.

- **Description**: Objectively describe events, describe reactions or consequences, suggest alternatives.

- **Problem Focus**: Focus on the problem rather than the person's shortcomings.

- **Inquiry**: Ask as much as you declare. Ask questions first.

- **Common Agreement**: Identify and reiterate areas of shared agreement.

- **Positive Ratios**: Use at least three, and ideally five, positive statements for every negative statement.

- **Two-way**: Say only three or five sentences before you give the other person a chance to speak.

In supportive communication, it is good to be descriptive rather than evaluative during discourse. Evaluation makes judgement or places a label on the behaviour, resulting in arguments, bad feelings or deterioration in the relationship. In contrast, descriptive communication allows a person to be congruent and authentic as well as helpful. Descriptive communication involves:

Source: https://svncornerstone.com/svn-is-one-of-the-most-powerful-brokerage-firms-in-the-world/

1. Describe the event, behaviour or circumstance objectively.

2. Describe outcomes and/or your feelings, not the other person's attributes.

3. Suggest alternative solutions that could resolve the issue.

How To Establish And Achieve Everest Goals

The Importance of Goals

Everest goals in organizations represent the peek, the culminating, the supreme achievement that can be attained. It possesses attributes that motivate spectacular performance with outcomes that were never expected to be accomplished. To grasp

SET SMART GOALS

https://upraise.io/blog/smart-goals-can-help-organization

the concept one has to understand the importance of goals and goal setting in both individual and organizational performance. Goal setting is a common strategy for improving performance. For high performance to be achieved, goals should always be established to attain it.

Low   **Goal Setting and Performance**   **High**

PERFORMANCE POSITIVE

Type of Goal

Easy Goal

General Goal

SMART Stretch Goal

Everest Goal

S M A R T

Five Everest Goals Attributes

1. Are positively deviant
2. Represent goods of first intent
3. Possess an affirmative orientation
4. Represent a contribution
5. Create and foster sustainable positive energy

Specific	Detailed not vague
Measurable	Can be measured
Attainable	Realistically achievable
Relevant	Inline with your values
Time-bound	Have a deadline

Everest goals represent positive deviance. Deviance has a negative connotation, the word is usually used to criticize. However, deviance refers to a condition that is not normal or unexpected standard.

A Deviance Continuum

Negative Deviance (Mistakes)   Normal or Expected   Positive Deviance (Virtuousness)

DEFICIT GAPS   **ABUNDANCE GAPS**
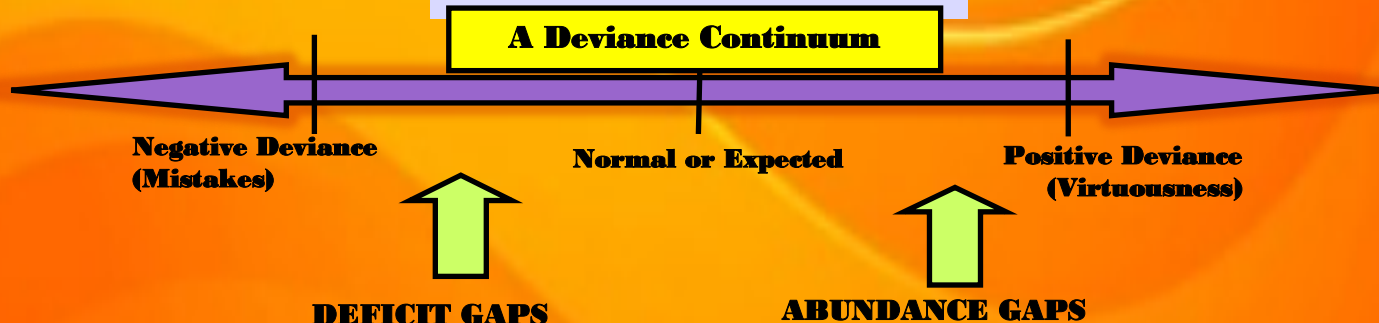
Goods of First Intent

- Emphasize inherent value
- Ensure that it is not a means to another end

Contribution

- Target providing benefit to others more than personal achievement

- Create unique value

Affirmative Orientation

- Highlight possibilities, not just probabilities

- Capitalize on strengths

Achieving Everest Goals

Everest goal
Set an Everest goal;
Target positive deviance

Action steps
The more difficult,
The more specificity;
Numerous small wins

Effects/contributions
Contributions to others;
Instrinsic Value beyond personal rewards

Measure and account-ability
Make it more difficult to fail than succeed;
Close loopholes

Sustainable Positive Energy

- Focus on what provides intrinsic motivation
- Capitalize on relational energy

Measures and Accountability
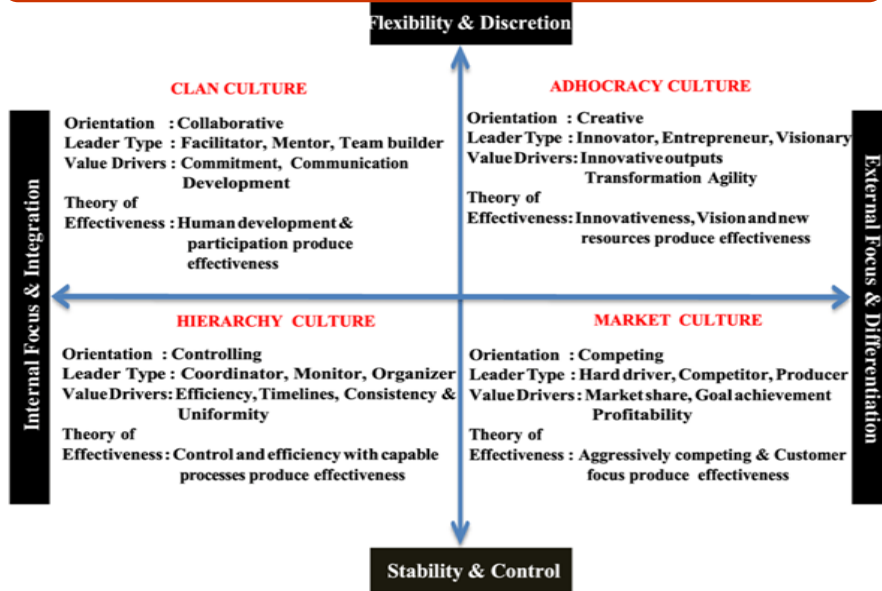
- Make it more difficult to fail than succeed
- Close Loopholes

Effects and Contribution

- Focus on the meaningful contribution
- Identify the inherent value
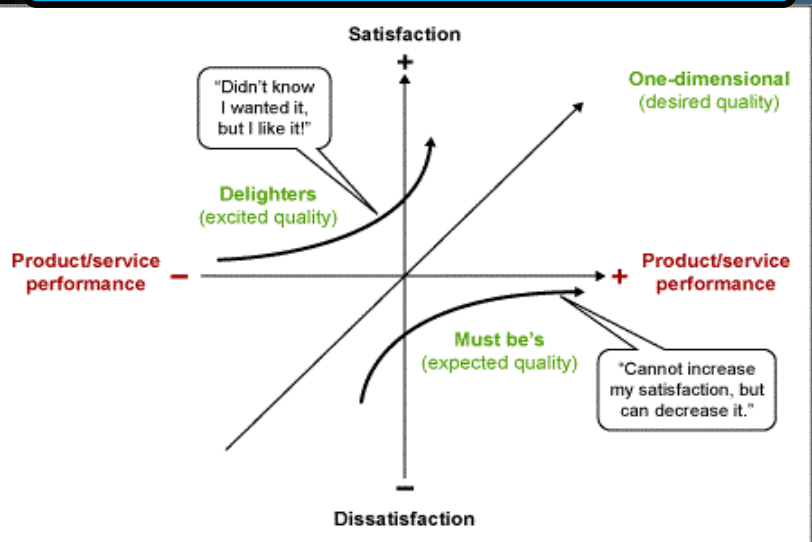
How To Apply Positive Leadership In Organizations

The Competing Values Framework

Flexibility & Discretion

CLAN CULTURE

Orientation : Collaborative
Leader Type : Facilitator, Mentor, Team builder
Value Drivers : Commitment, Communication
Development
Theory of
Effectiveness : Human development &
participation produce
effectiveness

ADHOCRACY CULTURE

Orientation : Creative
Leader Type : Innovator, Entrepreneur, Visionary
Value Drivers : Innovative outputs
Transformation Agility
Theory of
Effectiveness : Innovativeness, Vision and new
resources produce effectiveness

Internal Focus & Integration

External Focus & Differentiation

HIERARCHY CULTURE

Orientation : Controlling
Leader Type : Coordinator, Monitor, Organizer
Value Drivers : Efficiency, Timelines, Consistency &
Uniformity
Theory of
Effectiveness : Control and efficiency with capable
processes produce effectiveness

MARKET CULTURE

Orientation : Competing
Leader Type : Hard driver, Competitor, Producer
Value Drivers : Market share, Goal achievement
Profitability
Theory of
Effectiveness : Aggressively competing & Customer
focus produce effectiveness

Stability & Control

Practicing positive leadership is more than the pursuit of personal excellence or demonstrating individual capabilities. In the context of the organization it encompasses multiple constituencies that are to be addressed. The competing values framework aid leaders with the implementation of positive leadership in the organization to organize their priorities and actions. Each quadrant of the framework help to organize the major practices that the leader can implement to achieve positive performance. A well rounded organizational process enables the leader to maintain efficiency and predictability.

Source: https://blog.weareofftherecord.com/how-to-use-nps-for-more-than-just-measuring-customer-satisfaction-33e0785e4b19

The Kano Model

Organizations have customers who are affected by the product or service delivered. Whether internal or external based, organizations are aware of the need to satisfy their customers. Loyal customers commit to the organization compared to satisfied customers. Kano model is a practical tool used in enhancing customer loyal.

Satisfaction +

"Didn't know I wanted it, but I like it!"

One-dimensional (desired quality)

Delighters (excited quality)

Product/service performance —

Product/service performance +

Must be's (expected quality)

"Cannot increase my satisfaction, but can decrease it."

Dissatisfaction —

Source: https://www.isixsigma.com/tools-templates/kano-analysis/kano-analysis-customer-needs-are-ever-changing/

The Five Dimensions of Empowerment

DIMENSION	EXPLANATION
• Self-efficacy	• A sense of personal competence
• Self-determination	• A sense of personal choice
• Personal consequence	• A sense of having impact
• Meaning	• A sense value in activity
• Trust	• A sense of security

Conclusion

Cameron went in-depth with his outlining of positive leadership practices and how organizations can achieve successful results through the implementation of the said practices. The suggestions and applications outlined can be effective in procuring positive deviant performance within organizations.